

ANCIENT DISCIPLINES PART 2 – FASTING

Pastor George Dupree – Sunday, January 30, 2011

Fasting is a private practice that has a public reward. Fasting can facilitate a breakthrough, it can help pave the way for a new endeavor, fasting is meant to ultimately bring you closer to God.

Fasting is an ancient discipline that needs to be revisited in the church today. As followers of Christ it is expected that we will fast.

Listen to something that Jesus said about fasting.

† Matthew 6:16 Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.

He doesn't say _____ you fast, He says _____ you fast... it's something that's expected of us!

Jesus goes on to tell us that there is a _____ for fasting.

† Matthew 6: 17 But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 18 so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

The _____ Of Fasting

Fasting will cause you to become physically weak, as you become aware of your physical hunger and weakness it will remind you of spiritual hunger and your need for God in your life.

God Works In Our _____

† 2Corinthians 12:7 To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. 9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

Fasting Can Awaken _____ In Me

When I fast and I feel hungry I can be reminded that over half the world is on a starvation diet everyday. I can be reminded of how blessed I am and I will open my mouth and pray for them, I'll also open my wallet and give money so they can eat.

In ancient Israel the Jewish people would fast on a regular basis and one time we see they asked God why it didn't work, why He didn't seem to hear them when they prayed. (*For His response to Read Isaiah 58:1-12*)

† Isaiah 58:6 "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? 7 Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter — when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?"

This powerful indictment says that we can't neglect the poor and needy. But don't think the only needy people are in some far away country or just people with no money. Wealthy people are needy too; they need the Lord just like anyone else does. There are needy people on skid row and mahogany row too.

There are different types of fasts, here are a few.

- 1 – An Absolute Fast – No Food or Water at all, this is very rare.
- 2 – A Partial fast, limited food for a limited time.
- 3 – A Daniel Fast, Daniel fasted from sweets, meats and wine.

Sometimes a fast will be required for a breakthrough.

† Matthew 17:14 ...a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying, 15 "Lord, have mercy on my son..." 19 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" 20 So Jesus said to them, "Because you have so little faith... nothing will be impossible for you. 21 However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."

Sometimes a fast will be needed to launch a new endeavor.

† Acts 14:23 Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.

Jesus makes this promise to us, the hungry will be filled.

† Matthew 5:6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.